ACTION: CE/WUMB (276) INFO: CE/LGL, CEDORECORD, DC/CE, DCCE/OPS, LIMITED, MDSX, ODPD, ORMS/CE, PCS/CAB, FILE, C/PCS, CE/W, CED/CIC (4/W)

98 0748996 ASR PAGE 001 IN 0748996
TOR: 061335Z MAR 98 MNSK 17622

SECRET 061332Z MAR 98 STAFF

CITE MINSK 17622

TO: DIRECTOR.

FOR: LIMIT DISSEM CE/WUMB INFO CE/W, CED/CIC, PCS/CAB, DCCE/OPS, DC/CE, CE/LGL

SLUGS: WNINTEL JYVAPOROUS

*SUBJECT: BKGB ACCESS SUPPORT TO USG<ASSASSINATION>RECORD REVIEW BOARD

REF: NONE.

TEXT:

1. ACTION REQUIRED: PLEASE SEE BELOW; TRACES ON SUBJS IN PARA 5; GUIDANCE ON ARRB-BKGB ACCESS REQUEST.

2. ON MORNING 6 MAR 98 POLECON OFFICER AND DCM MET WITH COS TO ALERT HIM TO POSSIBLE NEED FOR STATION SUPPORT TO FACILITATE FUTURE MEETING(S) WITH BKGB BY EMBASSY OR OTHER USG PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN *FOLLOWUP INQUERIES ON BEHALF OF USG'S<ASSASSINATION>RECORD REVIEW BOARD (ARRB). ARRB IS CONGRESSIONALLY MANDATED AND FUNDED BODY *LOOKING AT ALL DOCUMENTS RELATED TO<ASSASSINATION>OF PRESIDENT<JOHN> *F.<KENNEDY.> OF INTEREST IN MINSK ARE RECORDS HELD BY THE BKGB *RELATED TO<LEE HARVEY OSWALD>AND THE TIME HE SPENT HERE. ARRB APPARENTLY WANTS COPIES OF ALL THESE BKGB RECORDS TO MAKE THEM AVAILABLE FOR SCHOLARLY REVIEW AND RESEARCH PURPOSES.

3. PER POLECON OFFICER, THE ARRB CHAIRMAN (A RESPECTED RETIRED FEDERAL JUDGE) HAD REPORTEDLY MADE INQUERIES HERE IN OCTOBER 1996, AT WHICH TIME STATION HAD, WITH HQS CONCURRENCE, FACILITATED BKGB MEETINGS (BUT STATION WAS APPARENTLY DIRECTED BY HQS TO AVOID ALL OTHER INVOLVEMENT). BKGB TOOK REQUEST FOR COPIES OF THE DOCUMENTS UNDER REVIEW, BUT NO DOCUMENTS WERE EVER PROVIDED. WHEN PRESSED, BKGB SAID THEY WOULD ANSWER SPECIFIC QUESTIONS, BUT THEIR "PRIVACY LAWS" WOULD NOT LET THEM RELEASE RECORDS WHICH RELATE TO LIVING BELARUSSIANS (PER POLECON, THIS SPEFICALLY INCLUDED OSWALD'S FORMER WIFE, MARINA). ARRB PRESENTED LENGTHY LIST OF DETAILED, LEGALISTIC, AND (WHAT POLECON OFFICER, HERSELF A LAWYER, DESCRIBED AS) ONEROUS QUERIES. BKGB NEVER RESPONDED.

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4. EMBASSY UNDERSTOOD THAT LEGISLATIVE MANDATE FOR ARRB HAD EXPIRED IN FALL 1997, SO DID NOT FOLLOWUP FURTHER. HOWEVER, MANDATE WAS APPARENTLY EXTENDED TO FALL 1998, AND ARRB'S INTEREST IN BKGB INFORMATION HAS BEEN REACTIVATED. ARRB TEAM MAY WISH TO COME TO MINSK TO TRY AGAIN TO OBTAIN THESE RECORDS FROM BKGB, OR AT LEAST GET EMBASSY TO REVITALIZE EFFORTS TO DO SO.

5. FOR THE RECORD (AND HQS TRACES), AT THE TIME OF THE ARRB'S OCT 1996 MEETINGS WITH BKGB, ARRB MET PRINCIPLY WITH THE FOLLOWING BKGB OFFICIALS:

-- ALEKSANDR ((VERAS)), HEAD OF SECTION (NFI)
-- LEV ((PIMENAU)), HEAD OF SECTION (NFI)
-- ALEKSANDR ((ABLAMEIKA)), PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPT.

AT SOME POINT DURING MEETINGS THEY WERE JOINED BY:

-- GENNADIY ((NARKEVICH)) (PHONETIC), A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, BKGB. (THIS IS ALMOST CERTAINLY IDEN.)

REQUEST HQS TRACES ON FOUR BKGB OFFICERS ABOVE.

6. COMPLICATING ALL THIS IS FACT THAT AT SOME POINT, AUTHOR NORMAN MAILER (APPARENTLY WITH EMBASSY ACCESS ASSISTANCE) WAS GIVEN ACCESS TO (SOME/ALL? OF) THE BKGB'S OSWALD RECORDS, WHICH MAILER REFERS TO EXTENSIVELY IN HIS BOOK "OSWALD'S TALE: AN AMERICAN MYSTERY," PUBLISHED IN 1995. AFTER THE FACT, PER POLECON OFFICER, BKGB REALIZED THAT MAILER MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROFITS FROM THIS BOOK, AND THAT THE BKGB HAD GOTTEN NOTHING FOR PROVIDING ACCESS TO THEIR RECORDS, THUS THEY REPORTEDLY FELT THEY HAD BEEN CHEATED.

7. BALL IS NOW IN STATE'S COURT, BUT THEY AND EMBASSY EXPECT THAT REQUEST WILL BE FORTHCOMING FROM ARRB IN NEAR FUTURE, AND THENCE TO STATION, TO FACILITATE MEETINGS WITH BKGB ON THIS MATTER. TO BE A BIT AHEAD OF THE CURVE, REQUEST HQS GUIDANCE AND AUTHORIZATION AS APPROPRIATE.

8. FILE: 227-002-001; 201-1482358. DECL ON: X1. CL REASON: 1.5(C). CL BY: 0702653. DRV HUM 4-82.

END OF MESSAGE SECRET

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